

History and its effect on today's youth

Shaping Europe's future together

Østfold County Council

Østfold is a county located southeast of Oslo, at the Swedish border. Østfold has an area of 4,186 km², and 265,000 inhabitants. The most important business sectors are agriculture, forestry and industry. The county council's main task is to act as a regional developer. It is our responsibility to help expand the labor market by stimulating creativity and innovation. Climate and energy are important focus areas for the regional development work in Østfold. The county is steeped in history. The country's earliest settlements are to be found here in Østfold, and there are many petroglyph sites to be explored. Norway's best kept viking long boat, Tuneskipet, was found here 150 years ago, and the county has a rich maritime history and a long coastline. The Old Town in Fredrikstad, founded in 1567, is also the oldest, and best kept, fortified city in Northern Europe.

The County Council has been actively involved in international projects and partnerships for many years. Østfold participates in European organizations such as AER and CPMR and in partnerships in the North Sea and Baltic Sea regions (NSC and BSSSC). In addition, Østfold is heavily involved in the INTERREG programs.

Greåker vgs

Greåker Upper secondary school is a large school situated between the two cities Sarpsborg and Fredrikstad approximately 75 kilometres from Oslo. The school has close to 1100 students (aged between 15-18), and a staff of around 140-150 teachers. Greåker provides vocational courses in construction and building and in health services, as well as educational courses within the fields of general studies, science and music. The school has long traditions when it comes to running and participating in projects with international partners. We have among other things recently been involved in a Comenius- project (Erasmus +) with schools in Germany, Holland, Sweden and Scotland aptly named "Re-thinking Energy", in which we focused on sustainability and European cooperation. We have also, for more than 20 years, helped funding schools in El Salvador.

The project idea

We are looking for an upper secondary school (age group 15-18) in Europe for a partnership cooperation. Our main topic of interest is democracy and democratic competence, participation and traditions. We wish to study how young people in Europe look at the current political climate, and further explore how they look at their ability and opportunity to

influence political decisions. One thing we would like to look at in this respect is for instance the influence of social media.

We would also like to put all this into a historical context looking at how we are all shaped by our respective country's past experiences. Among the questions that we hope to answer through this project are; Do we take democracy for granted? Have we learned anything from our history? How can young, and historical aware, people help shape Europe's democratic future?

Our aim is to see how we can develop teaching methods and tools within the subjects of History and Social Science that can both help promote a deeper understanding of today's Europe, and promote and stimulate our students democratic understanding and their shared international responsibilities.

We would like to achieve this aim by providing platforms, such as, for example, a teacher exchange program. By visiting each other, teachers from different countries would be given an opportunity to discuss and compare their respective countries' curricula, and together analyze how one can use major historical events, such as both World Wars and the following Cold War, to help our students to understand what is happening today in the era of Brexit and increasing nationalist sentiments. Our hope is that we by cooperating and coming together can avoid repeating the mistakes of the past by developing a joint digital website that promotes intercultural teaching methods and projects that will help us, and others, to reach this ambitious aim.

Contact:

Margareth Iuell-Heitmann, Head of General Studies and International Relations, Greåker Upper Secondary School.	Email: mariue@ostfoldfk.no Phone: 0047 69102000
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